



Center for Responsible Travel (CREST) Newsletter May-September 2022 | Volume 9, Issue 2

From the Interim Executive Director

Dear Responsible Travel Community,

I'm pleased to greet you as the Center for Responsible Travel's (CREST) new Interim Executive Director. My name is Wes Espinosa, and if CREST's past accomplishments are any indication, I have enormous shoes to fill. I accepted this role because I truly believe in this organization, in our team, and the partners that push us to be at the forefront of this movement. Since 2003, the positive impacts of CREST's programs have shaped destination communities and laid the foundation for innovative responsible tourism models globally. When practiced and managed responsibly, CREST has demonstrated that tourism can be a means to conserve the environment, improve livelihoods, and sustainably promote the authentic cultural & natural heritage that make travel destinations incredible.

As CREST embarks on this new chapter, rest assured that our team is committed to continued cross-sector collaboration. Through support from you, our networks, and our partners, we seek to make responsible tourism resources, tools, and practices more accessible to travelers and practitioners. Our research, content, and programs will be delivered to ensure that communities are at the helm of destination management and stewardship.

To our longstanding partners, thank you for your continued support. To our new followers and collaborators, welcome to our network! I look forward to working with each one of you and our brilliant team to make responsible travel a reality.



Wes Espinosa

Interim Executive Director

Program Updates

A Successful World Tourism Day Forum



On September 27th, we hosted our 6th annual World Tourism Day Forum. 270+ people from 69 countries gathered virtually as speakers and panelists discussed the importance of centering communities in tourism management and practices.

We heard how different US states and communities are implementing destination stewardship models, from Hawaii and Oregon to Michigan and Florida, and the importance of collaboration, education, and adapting strategies to local needs. We also heard why centering community stories in destination marketing and the development of tourism products is so important for creating

authenticity and promoting a sense of place.

At the end of the forum, the CREST Board of Directors presented this year's Martha Honey Legacy in Responsible Travel Award to Jonathan Tourtellot, CEO & Founder of the Destination Stewardship Center. Jonathan was amongst a pool of esteemed and highly qualified candidates, but what really sets him apart is his relentless commitment to destination stewardship, one that has been unmatched throughout his multi-decade career.



Congratulations, Jonathan!

Legacy Fund wins \$170k multi-year funding from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service



CREST's Torres del Paine Legacy Fund program was awarded a two-year \$170,000 project grant from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to conserve the endangered huemul (south Andean deer) and mitigate the human-wildlife conflict in Chile's Torres del Paine National Park.

Domestic livestock, fragmented tourism industry practices, and infrastructure challenges have increased threats of disease and competition to the endangered huemul - Chile's national animal. In partnership with Chile's National Forestry Corporation (CONAF), and a host of other project collaborators, the Legacy Fund aims to implement a project that 1) Removes the threat of domestic animal from huemul habitats in the national park; 2) Garners commitment on best practices for huemul conservation among tourism practitioners; 3) Improves trail infrastructure and interpretation on the public portion of the Base of the Towers Trail to conserve the huemul.

[Learn more about](#)

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Stewardship Tahoe



Throughout 2022, CREST and its partners (The Travel Foundation, Better Destinations LLC, SMG Consulting, Triple Point Strategic Consulting, and Civitas) have been working with a multi-partner coalition in the greater Tahoe Region to collectively redefine how destination management can better serve those who live, work, and play in the area. The information gathering phase, which consisted of data collection and stakeholder engagement, including public visioning workshops, targeted discussion groups, individual interviews, resident and visitor surveys, is coming to a close.

The plan will help address recent pressures and challenges while optimizing the value of recreation and tourism in the changing Tahoe basin and world.

[Learn more](#)

Sustainable Funding for Big Bay



During Summer 2022, CREST worked with the Big Bay Stewardship Council (BBSC) and other community leaders to develop a long-term sustainable funding plan for the council. CREST led four virtual workshops and to-date, has supported the submission of two grant proposals, all with the goal of responsibly scaling this destination stewardship initiative. Thanks to support from the Lundin Foundation, CREST was able to develop comprehensive storytelling, proposal writing, and partnership building workshops that focused on bringing multi-stakeholder support to the BBSC.

The Destination Stewardship Report



The latest e-quarterly report, a partnership between CREST, the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) and the Destination Stewardship Center, includes useful lessons and examples from Malaysia, Greece, Brazil, and North Carolina, USA.

[Read the latest](#)

A Fond Farewell



At the end of September, Dr. Gregory Miller made the decision to move on from CREST's executive director role to focus on his [independent consulting](#) work. In 2019, Greg joined CREST after founder and former executive director Martha Honey retired. Over the past three years, he has set CREST on a path to address some of the most pressing threats facing the tourism industry, including climate change, overtourism, inequity, and biodiversity and cultural heritage loss. Perhaps most importantly, he understood that if we wanted to make lasting change, we couldn't tackle these challenges alone.

To have a true impact, we would need to form meaningful, long-lasting partnerships with communities and others in the industry. Whether it was co-founding the Future of Tourism Coalition or formalizing a partnership between CREST and the National Park Service, Greg was able to do just that. We are so grateful for his dedication to transforming travel with CREST over the past three years and wish him luck on his next adventure.

Support

CREST depends on support from donors to create a positive impact in tourism destinations globally. If you like our work, consider giving a one-time or recurring donation here. Every dollar will go directly to our programs and help us scale our impact. Thank you!

[Donate today](#)

Thank You Auction Sponsors!





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The Center for Responsible Travel (CREST) is a 501 (c)(3) global nonprofit organization based in Washington, DC dedicated to increasing the positive global impact of responsible tourism. Founded in 2003, our mission is to promote responsible tourism policies and practices globally so that local communities may thrive and steward their cultural resources and biodiversity. [Support our work here.](#)

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